

# Utah Crash Summary 2003



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# Introduction

- Purpose:** The Utah Crash Summary, produced annually, identifies and describes the trends and effects of traffic crashes in Utah. The statistics within the Utah Crash Summary describe factors that contribute to the occurrence of crashes, and crash-related injuries and fatalities. This report is designed to heighten awareness about traffic safety by allowing safety program specialists, public health personnel, and other interested individuals to identify areas where programs may be focused in an effort to reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities.
- Crash Data:** The data for this summary is derived from Utah crash reports. These reports are completed by law enforcement officers throughout the state who collect data from crash scenes on public roadways. Information is collected when a crash involved injuries, fatalities, or at least \$1,000 property damage; when the jurisdiction in which the crash occurs requires it; or when the responding officer determines that a report is warranted.
- Crash reports are forwarded to the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) for central collection. UDOT reviews the crash report forms and enters the data into a database called the Crash Analysis Reporting System (CARS).
- Private Property Crashes:** Beginning in 1997, all private property crashes were excluded from CARS. Since private property crashes accounted for approximately 10% of crashes in previous years, the decrease in crashes since 1997 is due in part to the exclusion of private property crashes.
- Fatal Crashes:** Additional information is collected on fatal crashes and compiled into a separate database, the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). This database was used for the reporting of alcohol and other drug-related crashes and fatalities.
- Fact Sheets:** In order to provide information at a glance, each section of the crash summary is accompanied by a Utah Crash Fact Sheet. The fact sheets provide an overview of the section, and are useful when presenting information to others.
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- Available At:** Printed copies of the Utah Crash Summary are available at the Utah Highway Safety Office. The summary is also available on the internet at [www.highwaysafety.utah.gov](http://www.highwaysafety.utah.gov).

## **Executive Summary**

Measurable progress has been made to reduce motor vehicle crashes in Utah, with a steady decline in the injury and fatal crash rates since 1971. These reductions can be attributed to a variety of factors, including:

- Statewide and local traffic safety programs that have increased awareness of traffic safety issues;
- Legislation mandating seatbelt use, graduated driver licensing, and enhanced penalties for impaired driving;
- Aggressive media and enforcement programs targeting driver behavior;
- Improved engineering of roadway infrastructure;
- Advanced engineering to provide safer motor vehicles and improve crash survivability.

The personal and socioeconomic effect of motor vehicle crashes is a continuing concern in the state of Utah, with special focus on reducing the tragedy of injury and death. In 2003, Utah made notable progress in the following areas when compared to 2002:

- Utah experienced a 4% reduction in the rate of motor vehicle crashes, which resulted in a 5% reduction in the rate of injured persons;
- Approximately 15% of motor vehicle crashes in Utah involved alcohol or other drugs; the lowest percentage in ten years;
- The percentage of teenage-driver crashes dropped to 28%, which also marks a ten-year low;
- The rate of speed-related crashes decreased 3%.

As improvements are made and progress continues, traffic safety needs to remain a top priority in Utah. In 2003:

- Rural crashes were 6 times more likely to result in a fatality than crashes in urban areas;
- Less than half (48%) of the persons killed in a crash were using a seat belt, and unbelted occupants were 23 times more likely to be killed in a crash than belted occupants;
- Utah experienced a 9% increase in the rate of pedestrian fatalities.

The 2003 Utah Crash Summary contains further details regarding motor vehicle crashes in Utah. In addition, each section of this Crash Summary begins with a colorful and informative Utah Crash Fact Sheet that quickly summarizes the detailed information in the section.

The Utah Department of Public Safety's Highway Safety Office invites users of this Crash Summary to help promote motor vehicle safety in our communities. As a partner in the highway safety community, your assistance will make Utah a safer place to drive, bicycle and walk.



## Utah Crash Clock 2003

### In Utah during 2003:

- Every 10 minutes a crash occurred.
- Every 19 minutes a person was injured in a crash.
- Every 28 hours a person was killed in a crash.
- Every 3 days an unbelted crash occupant was killed.
- Every 4 1/2 hours an alcohol or other drug-related crash occurred.
- Every 8 days a person died in an alcohol or other drug-related crash.
- Every 37 minutes a teenage-driver crash occurred.
- Every 7 days a person died in a teenage-driver crash.
- Every hour a speed-related crash occurred.
- Every 4 1/2 days a person died in a speed-related crash.
- Every hour a motorcyclist was involved in a crash.
- Every 17 days a motorcyclist was killed in a crash.
- Every 13 hours a pedestrian was involved in a crash.
- Every 13 days a pedestrian was killed in a crash.
- Every 13 hours a bicyclist was involved in a crash.

